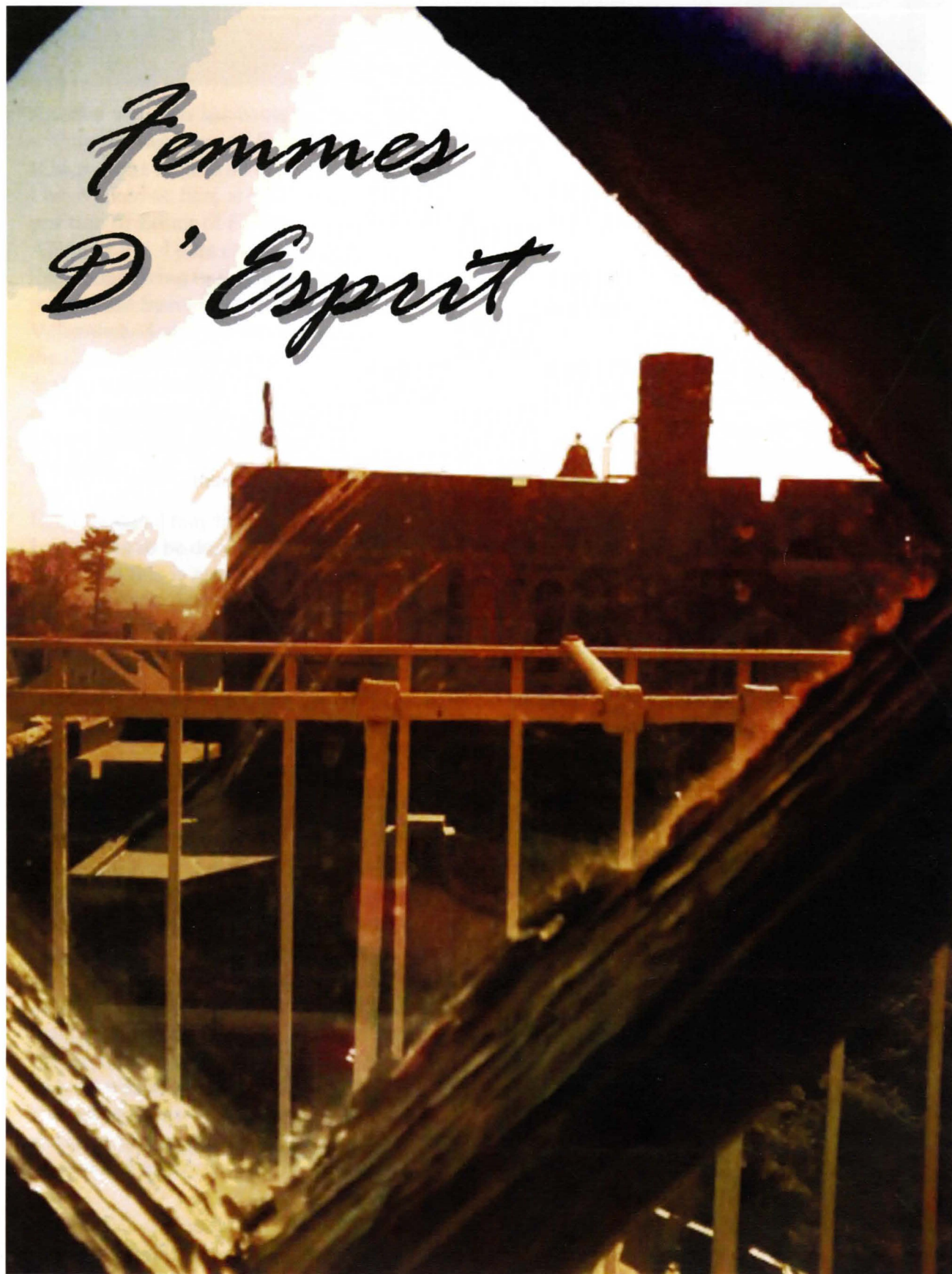


# Femmes D'Esprit



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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Another semester has come and gone and with it, my last issue of *Femmes D'Esprit*. It is my time to pass on my many roles that I have taken on here at CNR. I pass on the position of Editor of *Femmes D'Esprit* to Alicia Muth. I pass on the RA position in the Honors wing to Kayla Cummings. I pass on the Spectrum presidency to Kira Velazquez. I also am leaving my spot on the CNR swim team and my Orientation Staff position behind. I know that there are people to take the places that I am leaving vacant but I will miss having each of these positions.

Even though I may not know exactly what I am going to be doing after I graduate, I know that this is just the end of one chapter of my life and the beginning of another. There have been many experiences throughout my four years here that I will never forget. Among those include my experiences with the NRHC for the past two years.

The NRHC conference in Portland, Maine, in 2011 was amazing. We were able to see the city in the middle of a blizzard. The day that we were touring lighthouses, we were soaked to the bone but we enjoyed every minute of it. In Baltimore, Maryland, this year we were able to see some historical landmarks that we may have never been able to see otherwise. We walked so much, but all the sights made up for all the aches and pains the following days. I was able to meet so many different Honors students who seemed just as crazy as me — a Chemistry and Math major who is involved in so many different things.

I am very glad that I was able to take advantage of all of these different things within my time here at CNR. My advice to those who follow is to take every opportunity handed to you without spreading yourself too thin. Make sure you take time for yourself so that you are able to stay on top of things and not burn out.

Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars.



About the Cover: Taken from the window in the Honors Center, Lena Fin entitled this "Perspective". 2011 Digital



# HONORS MATTERS:

Dr. Amy Bass, Professor of History, Honors Program Director

The invitation has been sitting on my kitchen counter for the better part of two months, staring at me. The RSVP date looms close. And I think I have to attend because I agreed to give a lecture while I'm there

My college reunion.

It isn't that I don't have fond memories of college. I loved it. Most everything I know about the liberal arts started there. Indeed, when I took the reins of the Honors Program almost ten years ago, I quickly realized that despite semesters of education and a series of degrees after my undergraduate years, everything I knew about the primacy of the liberal arts started at Bates College.

And now I am to return, with a four-day program of festivities and parades on the campus I once called my own. My hesitation to go stems from my to-do list: in the time I have before I leave for London for the Olympic, my schedule is jam-packed with grading, commencement, writing, and so on. Besides, I keep reasoning: I don't need to travel to Maine to see my college friends. They surround me. They fill the inbox of my email, pop up in photos shared on Facebook, challenge me at Words with Friends, and ring my phone on special occasions. We gather together when in each other's towns; there is no question that I can always get a dinner date in Boston, just as they know that I would drop anything to see them when they come to New York.

As we enter graduation season at CNR, I think of how these connections are forged. Keeping in touch with people is easier than it ever has been: no stamps, no pony express, no telegrams. You don't need to talk to someone to call them "friend". Indeed, you don't even have to know someone to call them "friend". All of the wonders of technology, from social media to the telephones in our pockets makes keeping people in your life quite easy.

But some connections demand more. My closest friends are those whose Facebook pages I rarely visit because we talk. Whether via text, by phone, or – more often – in person, there is still a varied and wonderful group of people that I maintain close relationships with from all walks of my life, and at the center is a core tight that exists exactly how it did when we all lived in Maine and went to college.

As you will see in their farewell essays, a tradition in *Femmes* for seniors, **Rachelle**, **Veronica**, **Cassie**, and **Akos** came into the Honors Program from very different places, and moved through their four years at CNR in very different ways. One tried to leave the college, another tried to leave the Honors Program. One started the Program late, another dove in headfirst right from the start. But each of them will take leave of this place with an Honors Diploma in their hands, a document that represents not just an amazing array of accomplishments, but also a bond that will remain whether they nurture it or not.

I write it most every year: I miss them already.

Good luck, seniors.



## WHAT HAS HONORS BEEN UP TO?

### January:

- ◇ Honors senior, **Cassandra Irons**, is awarded the Ursuline Educators Service Award (right).
- ◇ **Alissa Sciommeri** made the All-Conference team for the CNR Swim team.



### February:

- ◇ First Honors board meeting of the semester was held.

### March:

- ◇ Honors students attended a brown bag lunch to discuss the Super Tuesday results with Dr. McCarthy (right).
- ◇ Senior **Akosuah Agyei** named Newman Civil Fellow by Campus Compact.
- ◇ **Maya Menon** designed new banners for the New Rochelle Public Library's Children's Room.



### April:

- ◇ **Rachelle LeBlanc**, **Cassandra Irons**, **Kristina Nilaj**, **Regina Alvarado**, and **Alissa Sciommeri** attended the NRHC conference in Baltimore. Cassie & Regina presented a roundtable discussion on the activity 'Coming Out Stars', Kristina & Alissa joined forces for a roundtable about Honors and Sports, and finally, Cassie had a poster presentation titled 'Gay Rights as Human Rights: LGBT\* issues on Faith-Based College Campuses.' Rachelle live blogged the event for the CNR webpage.
- ◇ **Kayla Cummings**, **Akos Agyei**, and **Elizabeth Johnston** participated in the Model United Nations in New York City.
- ◇ Honors hosted Dr. Ross Wheeler, Executive member of the NRHC, for external review.
- ◇ Honors Conference day was held.
- ◇ In CNR Drama's production of Assassins, **Regina Alvarado** was costume coordinator and gun master; **Miranda Polat** was a member of the ensemble as well as the Set Crew; **Amelia Ellis** was Assistant to the Scenic Designer; and **Lee-Anne Daley** was part of the Set Crew and helped with the Box Office.
- ◇ Honors had brunch with President Huntington in the Castle Parlor.

### May:

- ◇ We will say good-bye to the graduating seniors **Akosuah Agyei**, **Rachelle LeBlanc**, **Veronica Harris**, and **Cassandra Irons**.

# HONORS COURSES: FALL, 2012

## First Year Offerings:

### **HON 110: *The First Year Experience* Dr. Rebecca LaFleur**

This course introduces students to the liberal arts, focused on the understanding of different ways of knowing. This year's theme, The Pursuit of Happiness, will be explored in this Honors section alongside all members of the first year cohort. In addition to the Friday breakout session, which will always take place in the Honors seminar room, students will take part in a series of lectures and meetings with professors from a variety of disciplines and majors in order to understand how different academic disciplines approach ideas of happiness. As well, Monday meetings with an array of professionals from Student Development will help students transition to college life. Reserved for incoming first year students. Please note: this course fulfills a requirement of the liberal arts core.

### **HON 105: *Honors Critical Research Essay* Dr. Daniel McCarthy**

The barebones objective of this course is to explore the arts of research and writing by bringing into being a thoughtful research paper of substantial length. Designed to acquaint students with the philosophical foundations, methodologies, analytical tools, and conventions of research and writing, the course examines how research is produced, by whom, and for what purposes. Throughout the semester, students will participate in a series of exercises in writing, critical reading, presentation, peer review, and analysis designed to leave them prepared for more advanced courses in the academic fields of their choosing. Reserved for incoming first year students. Please note: this course fulfills a requirement of the liberal arts core.

## Upper Division Offerings:

### **HON 283: *December in America* Dr. Amy Bass**

Holidays are cherished times for many, yet often, their roots are lost in their own evolutions. The U.S. includes many holidays in its calendar, some of which are shared globally, such as solstice and Armistice, while others, such as The Fourth of July, are uniquely American. Yet it is December when holidays are at the utmost focus: from Thanksgiving to New Year's Eve, most Americans celebrate something. Understanding December in America is to understand much about society. Students in this course will investigate how the holiday season came to be, and learn what it can tell us about who we are. From films such as Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life* to the history of the Pilgrims in Plymouth, students will engage in multiple forms of research – including engaging in oral histories with their own friends and families – as well as venture into the New York metropolitan area to get a better grasp of the roles of immigration, popular culture, food, decorative arts, and consumerism play in how America celebrates. Open to sophomores-seniors.

### **HON 385: *Memory, Remembering, Telling* Dr. Nereida Segura-Rico**

"Memory creates the chain of tradition which passes a happening on from generation to generation," states cultural theorist Walter Benjamin in "The Storyteller." Our colloquium will explore how memory works as a psychological faculty to focus on the textual and visual constructions of memory and its uses in the creation of a collective past. We will study the intersections of memory with the realms of the public and the private, oral and written culture, imagination and documentation, tradition and modernity. We will consider how memory was defined in Greek and Medieval philosophy to compare it with the formulations of memory stemming from a modern conception of time and the individual. Open only to juniors.

### **HON 490: *Senior Symposium I* Dr. Daniel McCarthy**

Entitled "The Legacy of the Text," the first part of this year-long capstone symposium asks seniors to READ! Students, in consultation with disciplinary mentors, will consider a variety of texts that reflects both their major interests and their interdisciplinary training, producing sound written analysis and evaluation of their choices based on criteria they develop, and creating a list of 5 to 8 books for the group to read together. As the course proceeds into next semester, a series of deliberations and conversations – including online discussion groups – for each text will continue, with the goal of choosing the common reading for the incoming Honors class. Open to seniors only.

# TIME TO GET GONE

Lena Fin, '15

*Inspired by Bob Dylan*

People come and go they say that's life  
Promises just weigh me down  
They all feel like goodbyes  
It's not a fight yet but  
it's not a good time  
To tell the kind of truth that's gonna  
hurt more than a lie  
When I hoped for the best I hoped you could understand,  
but I guess things look different when you've settled for hell  
And I can't figure out what's telling me to move on  
But I know enough to start packing  
'cause it's time to get gone

From a distance I hear sirens and see the red in your eyes  
But I can't see the beauty in a fire 'till it dies  
Have you ever looked up at the smog in the sky?  
Do you know what it's like to imagine a star?  
They say that when you know  
you don't know enough yet,  
so I guess that's the void that I feel in my head.  
And every star that I see is a promise to me  
It won't change a thing if I'm not here

There's only one beginning for each one of us  
and there's only one end  
but there's many goodbyes  
When I drive down this road every single night  
I keep on wishing for somebody to switch a sign.  
I can't wait to see your face in a place miles away  
I know there are others who won't understand  
And every star that I see is a promise from me  
It won't change a thing if I'm not here

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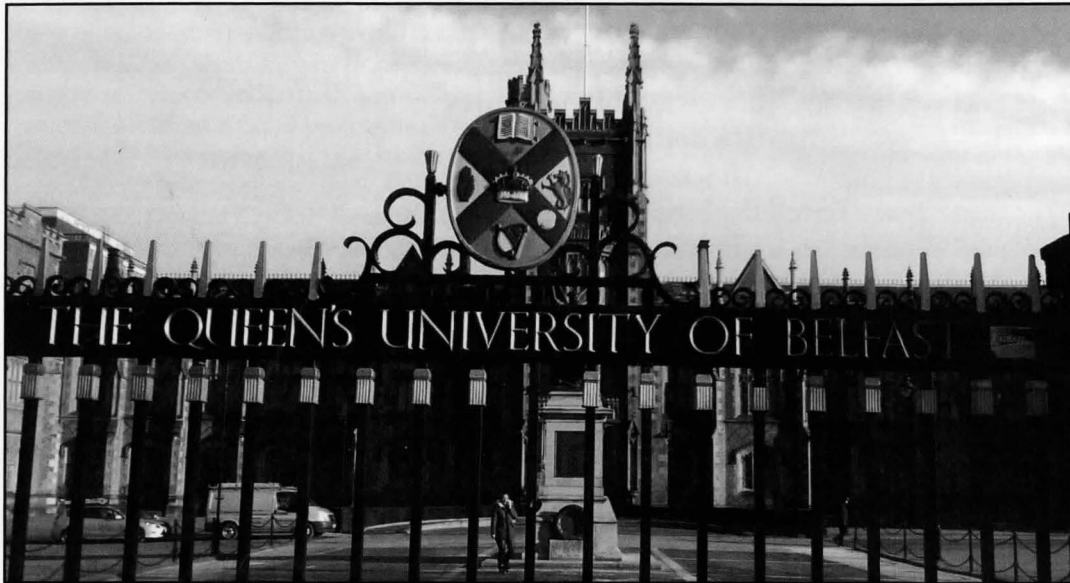
*Lena is enrolled this semester in HON 315, The American Singer-Songwriter, where students explore the historical and artistic contributions of those who make music.*



## HONORS ABROAD

Molly McMurry '13

*Molly shares some images from her spring 2012 semester abroad in Northern Ireland.*



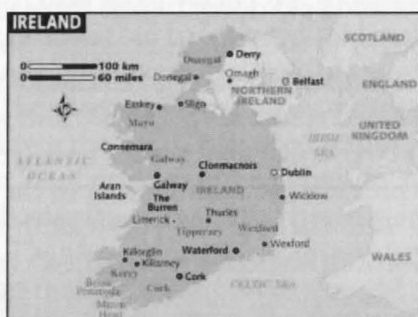
Lanyon Building, the center of Queen's University of Belfast, built in 1849 and done in Tudor Gothic style.



Molly at the River Liffey which runs through the center of Dublin.



Some artifacts from a favorite book: a map of Narnia (above) and a replica door of the wardrobe from *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe* (right).



Molly in Dublin standing before a grill and pub.

# ROOMMATES, ROOMS, & HOUSING...OH MY!

Rachelle LeBlanc, '12

The housing selection process will be over with by the time this issue of *Femmes* goes to print but I want to tell you my story anyway. Maybe you'll read, remember it, and use it for next year's housing selection.


It all starts with me, someone who has NO girl friends going to an all girls' school. The thought of it sounds redundant but here I am finishing up the last few weeks of my senior year and I've managed to make it through four years almost unscathed. How did I do it you ask? Well I stayed sane thanks to many things but I'm just writing to tell you about how I survived my many roommates... and how I didn't.

Let me start with a little background about myself: I have an extreme schedule and since freshman year I've taken 18 credits per semester and held down two to three jobs at a time, all the while maintaining the 3.5 GPA I needed to stay in the Honors program. So if anyone knows about hard work and struggling, I do. I would get up at 8:00 and go to classes until three, going to my work-study job in-between, and then I would run to CVS for 4:00 and work until 10:30, sometimes 11. But did my day end there? No, of course not, that would be too easy. I had to go back to campus and do homework until two, three, and sometimes four in the morning. My roommates hated it. I would do my homework with nothing but a desk lamp on and they would get mad that I was interrupting their sleep. Or sometimes I would do my homework in the hallways of Maura so not to disturb my roommates but they would still get mad because I would go in and out sometimes. There was no winning.

My roommate the first year was great... in the beginning. We got along fantastically and we had so much fun until I started dating my then boyfriend. He was around a bit but mostly I went to his house and I think it bothered her that *her* boyfriend was upstate. She would have her moments where she would just stop talking to me for days and even weeks. I would stress out over what I did, what I didn't do, did I say something wrong? I came up blank every time. She was always up late and slept like a rock so my studies never affected her. I couldn't think of anything besides the boyfriend situation.

Freshman year ended and she transferred out. I tried to transfer as well but it failed miserably so I took it as a sign that I was meant to be at CNR. So I removed my leave of absence and they paired me with a new girl who was a year older than me. We moved in, unpacked all of our things and then after her parents left she said she was going to stay with her boyfriend and she wouldn't be back until classes started. Well, okay, great! I get the room to myself. The next two nights I had to work but on the second night she was there when I came in. We didn't talk; we just went to bed. The next day was the first day of classes and I had to work again. Let me just tell you that yes, I worked *a lot*. When I worked at CVS my first two years in college I worked 40 hours and 12 hours of work-study a week. I barely had a life. I had time for work, school, and a boyfriend... no friends though.





So, back to my story, I came in that night around 10:30 and all of her stuff was gone. Surprise, surprise for me! We were roommates for one night and she moved out. That honestly lowered my self-esteem a bit but, oh well, I had the room all to myself. I got a new roommate about a month later; this time didn't start off too well either. We just didn't click like my freshman roommate and I did. It was like she had drawn an invisible line down the center of the room and I wasn't allowed to cross it. It just got worse from there. She would go to bed around eight o'clock! She goes to bed early and they put her in a room with a working girl that's up until 3 a.m. every night. Awesome! I'm sure you can put the pieces together on how it turned out. She'd get angry because I was up so late doing homework and I interrupted her sleep. The first time she gave me the cold shoulder she stopped talking to me for a week and I remember thinking, *no wonder you didn't get along with your last roommate*. Then out of nowhere she just starts talking to me again like nothing had happened. This went on and on for the first semester. One time she stopped talking to me for almost a month. I couldn't take it anymore; I was fed up and had to get out. So the RD found me a new room and I moved my stuff in over spring break.

The problem with that room wasn't the roommate. we actually got along well, but it was the room itself - the roof started to leak so I told maintenance but they couldn't be bothered to look at it. Then one night we had a horrible storm and all of my things got destroyed. We couldn't stay in the room since the walls were crumbling from water damage, so they moved us to open rooms down the hall. They tried to put us in a room together but we had a month left and there were a lot of open rooms so I put up a fight and asked them to just give me a break. I had such a rough year (in terms of roommates and rooms) that I deserved that last month in a room by myself. Thank goodness I got my own room because less than a week later I broke my foot... on the third floor of Maura. My mom and sister came down to help me out for a bit so the spare bed came in handy. The school offered to give me a room on the first floor of Ursula but they weren't going to help me move my stuff. I was on crutches. I laughed and said, "I don't think so." I had moved three times in one year and finally had a room to myself; I didn't care that I had to scoot down three flights of stairs to get to class. I was not moving again. Finally housing selection came and I chose a room in the Honor wing in Ursula. Luckily I was the only junior and they didn't want to put a first year or sophomore in with an upperclassman. A wise choice and I made it the whole year without a roommate.

Senior year came around and so did housing selection again. When I first picked my room I was the only one in it and it wasn't until august that I was told I had a roommate. Student Development sent me an e-mail telling me she was a graduate art student and that was it. When I moved in she wasn't there. Instead, she had left me a novel of a letter telling me she was in Sweden and she'd be back in a week, she was from Jersey but lived in Maryland and how she heard we had a lot in common. Despite the overwhelming enthusiasm from her, I was nervous to meet her. Everyone said how we would get along great and they were right. She's my twin, that's the only way to describe our connection- sisterly. I'm thankful to have met and had her here this whole year. As my senior year ends very quickly, I look back and see my living experiences go from bad to worse, to good, to great. I wish you the best of luck and I offer my advice: don't let someone make you feel bad for doing your homework or having a job. If your roommate makes you feel like a burden for being responsible, then find a new roommate.

Bonne chance!

# EMERGENCY!

Akosuah Agyei, '12

*The highlights of my experience volunteering in the Emergency Department at Albany Medical Center last summer.*

Some important skills to have as an ED volunteer:

- Be curious
- Ask sensible questions
- Be a good observant and listener
- Possess great communication skills

Patients at the ED like to chat and will tell you all about their health. As a volunteer, especially one who wants to work in the health field, it is advisable that you communicate with the patient using appropriate language. Before you start talking about personal endeavors, find out the patient's reason for being in the hospital and start your conversation from there. A volunteer is meant to be a floater who helps out with various activities including but are not limited to:

- Transporting patients from the ED stretcher to their beds in different departments or the operating room
- Going to the kitchen to get food for patients
- Filling warmer with blankets
- Taking patients to the get scanned: x-ray, ultrasound, Computerized Tomography (CT), Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- Escorting patients to the restroom
- Running errands to and from blood bank and pharmacy
- Shadowing doctors, nurses, and other ED personnel

- Following hospital's protocols

In Albany Med, all the trauma personnel follow the same protocol. Before a patient comes in, the trauma team is paged and they get ready for the patient. Once the patient arrives, he or she is transferred to the ED stretcher, hooked to the EKG and given IV fluid or blood or plasma depending on the patient. Then, the patient's clothing is completely removed; warm towels and sheets are placed over patient. Eyes and ears are checked and then the patient is rolled to the side away from the source of pain with back facing the examiner (usually resident). If the pain is in right arm, patient is rolled with right arm above the stretcher while left arm is resting on stretcher. Then, a little pressure is applied to the bones in the spine with the examiner's fingers and then it is recorded if the patient has any pain in area being touched. After examining the spine, patient is asked to squeeze butt cheeks. If the patient is male, the examiner checks the size of prostate by inserting a finger into the anus. Once completed, patient is rolled back to lying position and orders on tests needed are placed. This protocol was done to every patient that came to the A zone (nearly fatal patients). A similar procedure was done to those in the B (walk in or triage), C (pediatric) and D (contagious) zones but since I was rarely there, I could not record the protocols that were being followed on those zones.

This volunteer opportunity was very important because it gave me a window into the daily life of Emergency Personnel.

I liked the working environment and pace of the job so much that I want to be an ED physician because most infectious disease patients come to the ED first before they are transported to another department.

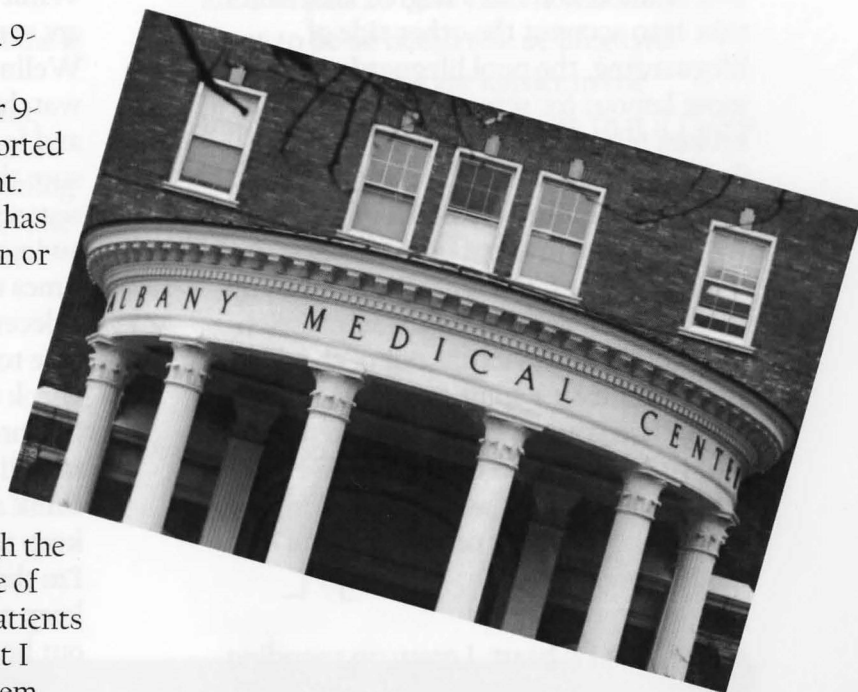
Residents saw about 10 patients in a 9-hour shift and Attendings were responsible for about 4 residents per 9-hour shift. The residents always reported to the attending after seeing a patient. When trauma arrives, the attending has to be present before anything is given or said about the patient.

I really enjoyed volunteering at the Emergency Department because there was rarely a dull moment, especially because patients came in with different illnesses. Although the patients might have been through the same accident, the effect on each one of them was not the same. I also saw patients with different infectious diseases but I was not able follow up with all of them because they were in and out (sent to another department immediately after being seen by a doctor or a physician assistant, PA).

Trauma procedures I saw: Intubation, Suturing, IV fluid insertion, Catheter insertion, EKG tests, splints, fracture repair, defibrillator and so on.



Albany Medical Center





## DIARY OF A LIFEGUARD

Alissa Sciommeri. '14

When you picture lifeguards, the first image that may come to mind is an attractive person with bleach-blond hair, tanned skin and a toned body running across the beach into the thrashing waves to pull a drowning victim to safety. While these images of ocean rescue lifeguards may stand correct to a degree, they don't take into account the other side of lifeguarding, the pool lifeguards, who are more famous for screaming 'WALK' like a broken record than for diving into a dangerous rip tide. While the training videos make lifeguarding look like a fun and exciting job they fail to mention that the job isn't really all that it's cracked up to be. If you were under the impression that I pull spinal victims out of the shallow end on a spine board every other week then you are surely mistaken. My job is a monotonous one in which I sit in a chair for two hours, which of course is a far cry from running on the beach in slow motion.

A beach rat by heart, I grew up spending my summers in the ocean. I knew how to swim as long as there was a foam board underneath me and attached to my wrist. If you had told me my senior year of high school I would be one of CNR's top distance swimmers and working year-round as a lifeguard, I probably wouldn't have believed you. Actually, I would have laughed and asked what in the world gave you that idea? But conversations with the right people sent me on my way from a surfer who could find her way back to her board to swimming miles without one and a job that pays well.

I've been a lifeguard for just under a year now and I guard year round. In the winter, I guard at The Wellness Center pool and in the summer I guard at the camp just around the corner from my house on Long Island.

While they are both lifeguarding jobs, they are very different from each other. At the Wellness Center, I often find myself watching the older residents swim back and forth and all I really have to do is make sure they come up for air every few seconds. On occasion I guard the local swim team and watch ten year olds tear my times to shreds. (Don't get me wrong, I'm a decent swimmer. I wouldn't have been able to become a lifeguard if I wasn't.) I check the chlorine levels once at the beginning of my shift, and sometimes I find myself guarding an empty pool. If I can think ahead I'll usually bring something to keep me occupied for the two hours that I'm there. Other times, I can find ways to keep myself entertained, such as figuring out how many times I have to walk the perimeter of the pool to walk a mile (21.5 in case you're wondering) or trying to calculate the volume of the swimming pool in cubic yards. (This hasn't been determined as of yet since the pool bottom descends from four feet to seven feet which would require a calculus-based approach as opposed to a geometric approach.) The pool is inside and the worst I have to worry about is the humidity. From the start of the season to the end of the season my skin is pasty white and flaky from the chlorine and lack of sun but at least there's money in my bank account to pay for tuition and

other important things like food.

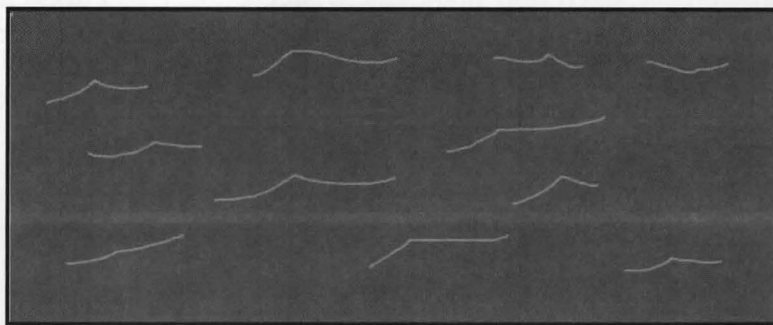
Camp is a whole different animal. I have no chair and there are no old people floating back and forth. More often than not I'm in the pool, which despite being in the sun for most of the day is usually freezing. In addition to the lifeguarding certification, I was required to complete a Water Safety Instructor course in order to teach swim lessons; I teach swimming lessons for the majority of the day. Sometimes in-between lessons I become a cafeteria lady along with my fellow guards. After lessons comes free swim, where our small backyard pool is almost always loaded to capacity with screaming children who look for rules to break. The guards draw straws to see who gets to guard the kiddie pool, which is away from the screaming children. In addition to that, we have the regular chlorine checks, which occur every half hour and usually fall in the middle of our lessons. Our pool is outside and the chlorine is usually on the higher side of the safe range. Between the sun and the chlorine, it's a miracle that I don't turn into a pile of ash by the end of the summer.

I start my summer coming off winter indoor guarding with pasty white skin and dark blond hair. Usually after the first week of camp, despite the liberal amounts of sunscreen I use, my skin becomes indistinguishable from my bright red suit. By the end of the summer I look like Malibu Barbie with my tanned skin, bleach-blond hair, and a check for about a

thousand dollars in my hand for about five minutes before I have to go pay my tuition with it.

Both my guard jobs have ups and downs and I can't pick one over the other because they're so different. All I know is that if I keep my certifications up to date, I have a steady job with decent pay through college and after if I need it and in this economy, I am thankful to have that. Eventually, I want to be an ocean rescue lifeguard. Though the saves are harder in the unpredictable waters, I know that if I keep training, in a few years I can do it. Two years ago I didn't think I would be a lifeguard at all and look where I am now. I

walk



grew up on the beach learning how to navigate the ocean, so combined with my existing lifeguard training I'm almost there!

# HONORS CONFERENCE—NRHC 2012

Rachelle LeBlanc '12

*How we spent our time at the NRHC in Baltimore*



My name is Rachelle and I'm a graduating senior at CNR. This April I was given the opportunity to attend the Northeast

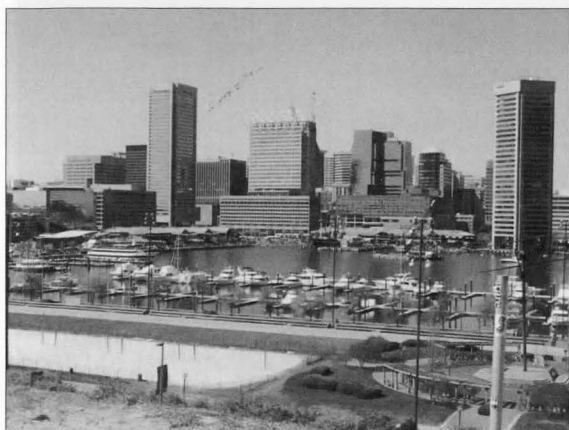
Regional Honors Council Conference in Baltimore, MD with the school's Honors Program. I was too afraid to give a presentation there, so as a compromise, Dr. Bass arranged for me to be the official blogger and photographer for the school. The Campus's College Relations office set up a blog system where I wrote blogs throughout the conference and they were posted to the CNR website. While I wrote down the best moments for all to read, I made sure to capture them on film as well. This was my first time attending the conference and it only makes me wish I had one more year so that I could go again — maybe even present! I had an amazing

time in Baltimore with a few more honors students. Read my blogs to see what we did over the weekend. Some of my photos are included in this piece but most are on the CNR Facebook page, so check those out too.

Thursday, April 12, 2012

12:59 p.m.

After a grueling three hour train ride on the Amtrak we finally made to Pennsylvania station in Baltimore, MD! The city has character. No, really, in all honesty Baltimore is beautiful and I'm really jealous of their green trees. I'd trade green for the brown ones we still have in New York. The Hyatt is a sight to see as well with its glass walls and artsy outside staircases. More pictures to follow!! This weekend is packed with things to keep us busy so I will have plenty of photos. Tonight we have a photo scavenger hunt- no rules just photography! I'm excited for the chance to explore Baltimore through the lens of a camera.



Pictured: Kristina Nilaj '13, Cassie Irons '12, Alissa Sciommeri '14, & Regina Alvarado '14.



Thursday, April 12, 2012 5:48 p.m.

Hello Baltimore! Dinner was a new experience for us all tonight. Dr. Bass had us step out of our comfort zones and try tapas! We had a perfect spot on the balcony at La Tasca to ourselves with a beautiful view of the harbor and the USS Constellation, which was built in 1853. We tried empanadas and gambas, and loved the food so much we order a second plate of each!



*Pictured: Regina & Alissa Sciommeri dine in front of the USS Constellation.*

Thursday, April 12, 2012 11:43 p.m.

Tonight was our icebreaker night at the NRHC. It was our chance to meet new people, explore the city and be creative all in one. Everyone who joined in tonight was separated into groups and given a list of "clues" that we all needed to find and take a group photo with. But the fun in the game was getting crazy with the photos with fun poses and including the locals and other tourists. Then we sent our photos to the coordinator who will be choosing winners tomorrow.

The five of us from CNR were completely split up but we all still had fun and got a chance to mingle with other schools. I even ran into one of my friends from Monroe! I have no pictures of tonight's adventure but I'll have plenty more tomorrow. Good

night!

Friday, April 13, 2012 12:25 p.m.

This morning Cassie, Regina, Alissa, and I went on a tour of west Baltimore. We had done a lot of exploring yesterday so we already knew the area a little bit. We stopped and explored the B&O railroad museum, the Orioles Stadium, the Bambino's house, and Edgar Allen Poe's house! We were all so excited to go to Poe's house on

Friday the 13th, especially with The Raven film coming out soon. But when we got



there we came to find it was closed. We were a little disappointed but we took some time to do a little thinking and horror writing on the front steps.

We continued on our tour to pass the Lexington Market and the Hippodrome (performing arts center) and ended with a delicious lunch at Edo Sushi on the harbor. Cassie insisted on continuing the tradition of getting sushi at each conference. So for any of those reading this- that'll go next year,

make sure you get sushi one day during the trip.



Sometime tonight some of us will possibly be starring in a flash mob! Stay tuned for photos of that. :)

Saturday, April 14, 2012 1:03 a.m.

After our excursion around West Baltimore all morning on Friday we headed back to the hotel for a lecture from Baltimore Sun journalist Gil Sandler. After the lecture, we ran into Dr. Bass who turned us right around and sent us back out the door to explore the city more. Don't get me wrong, we didn't mind! She sent us to the American Visionary Art Museum, and to get there we thought we might take a bike ride along the harbor. The bikes were adorable but the seats weren't so comfy, so we walked instead. There were many installations to see outside the museum and a few open buildings to walk through, so we didn't even go inside and just enjoyed everything there was to see outside.

After we got back to the hotel, Cassie, Alissa, and Regina went downstairs to join a flash mob going on, which ended up



surprising everyone during the dinner banquet. We ended the night with a lot of good performances at the conference's open mic night. We left at midnight even though it was still going strong. We need to wake up at 6:00 a.m., and it's coming quickly! Tomorrow starts the presentations and workshops so stay tuned!

Saturday, April 14, 2012 5:06 p.m.

This morning was the start of the round tables, poster sessions, and workshops. Cassie and Regina had their round table first thing this morning as part of the "honors and pride" table. They pitched an activity entitled "Coming out Stars" that challenges students in the honors programs to be aware and understand the coming out process in the LGBT community.



We then moved on to the paper sessions, which were really interesting and many were very good. The first one we attended was centered on Harry Potter and Twilight. One I found most intriguing was independent Hermione versus male-dependent Bella. I went on to listen about theories of Kafka and Poe inspired short stories.

To finish off the afternoon I joined in on a political poem and prose workshop where I learned about the Baltimore native Adrienne Rich and her poetry. During the workshop we ended it with a little political poetry writing. I channeled my feminist mind into my poems.

Here's what I wrote:

1.

*A girl?*

*She's unimportant.*

*A female?*

*An incomplete man;*

*A woman?*

*Amounts to nothing;*

*So you tell me,*

*But let me tell you what I say:*

*A girl,*

*Growth and innocence... Our future*

*A female,*

*Knowledge and strength... Our future*

*A woman,*

*Determination and an art form... Our future*

2.

*I can be what and who I want to be*

*I can be free to see myself*

*In a light that shines*

*From my own ignition*

*From the spark of my intelligence*

*From the bruises on my body*

*To the paint on my canvas*

*I am free to be me*

**Sunday, April 15, 2012 10:18 a.m.**

Today is the last day of the conference and we just had a few more things to do before we left. Cassie started up the morning with an LGBT poster board that she had used as her honors colloquium thesis last year. There were very few gay rights posters or presentations this whole weekend so Cassie was a pretty good hit

this morning.

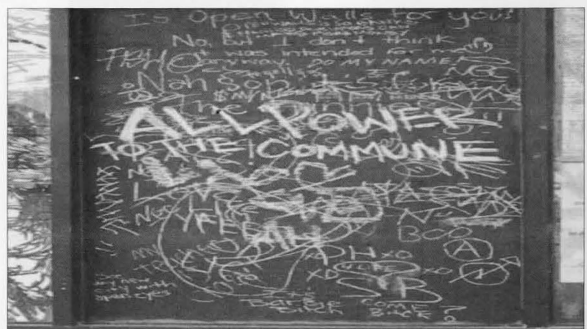
Kristina, Regina, and Alissa joined a round table discussion about the difficulties and benefits of balancing sports and honors. Now we're getting ready to say goodbye to another year at the Northeast Regional Honors Council Conference and to Baltimore.



**Sunday, April 15, 2012 6:08 p.m.**

We're all home and back on campus now, but I find us to be left with some of the best memories from our time at CNR so far. We had so much fun in Baltimore; the conference was a great experience that we all are thankful to have been given. So I give a thank you to CNR and Dr. Bass for sending us.

I'm going to miss Baltimore and the beauty it holds, the city was entirely my style and I could see myself going back to stay... maybe one day soon. There's so much history, culture, and art buried in the city that I recommend to everyone to visit at least once. You've read all about the conference through my blog so check out the city and adventures on CNR's Facebook page. Thank you everyone!





## REFLECTIONS ON BALTIMORE, 2012

I started off the conference with a cold and missed out on the first day of activities but I still managed to get a memorable experience from the trip to Baltimore. Going to the NHRC conference was a great experience that I did not expect. I met a lot of students from different schools ranging from Pennsylvania to New York. I met other athletes, resident assistants, and believe or not math/education majors. The poster presentations, round table discussions, and paper presentations were very well done and I enjoyed them very much. I was able to go to the ones with my interests such as math and education. To top it off they had great social programs such as the photo scavenger hunt and 1970's party which allowed for students to interact in different circumstances. Overall it was a great experience and I hope to go again next year in Philadelphia. Anyone who has the opportunity to go should take it!

-Kristina Nilaj, '13

I had an incredible time getting to explore Baltimore and being able to interact with other honors students. I never imagined it would be as fun as it was. I hope to be able to present at next year's conference!

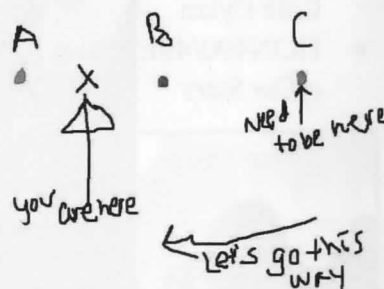
-Regina Alvarado, '14



## REFLECTIONS ON BALTIMORE, 2012

*As an Honors student, I learned the following things:*

- \*In a pinch, you can ball up your extra sweatshirt to use as a pillow on the train.
- \*Apparently, the honors student-athlete is a rare breed. It's like seeing a dog walk on its hind legs.
- \*I look really good in a pair of Ray-Bans, even if they're knock-offs. I got two pairs for \$20 at a vendor stand at the Inner Harbor
- \*There's logic and then there's Honors logic. Honors logic is: "let's go to the touristiest spot in the area during tourist season and try to find a local." Logic is: "locals tend to avoid tourist areas during tourist season." (I should know, I'm from a tourist area.)
- \*Long Islanders have a sixth sense that allows us to smell each other out. During the first student mixer, the guy I sat next to was from Long Island as well.
- \*New Yorkers seem to have a superiority complex. The Northeast Region encompasses the area from Baltimore up to and including parts of Canada. Four out of five people I spoke to at the conference either were from New York or went to school in New York.
- \*If you are reading a map and you're between Point A and Point B and you're trying to go to Point C which is next to Point B on the opposite side of Point A, obviously you need to go to Point A to get to Point C as demonstrated by the diagram on the right.
- \*A keynote speaker should be engaging and relevant to the point of the conference. A German Architect from Baltimore with a thick accent reading off the Baltimore Wikipedia page hits the nail on the head. Not.
- \*I'm neither a caterer nor a waitress but I work at Carvel. I don't think you need a Master's Degree to put food down on a table and make sure all eight people at said table are fed before proceeding to the next one.



Alissa Sciomerri, '14

# HONORS CONFERENCE DAY: 4.26.12

## PRESENTATIONS:

Colloquium: Women & the Law

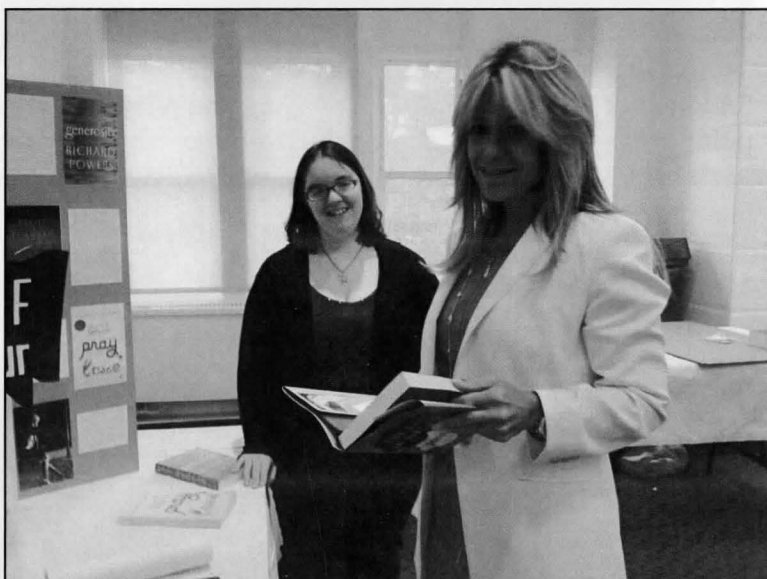
- Denise Dailey: "Should Genes be Patented?"
- Elizabeth Johnston: "Women's Voice in the Law"
- Veronica Harris: "How is Single-Sex Education Affecting Girls?"
- Kristina Nilaj: "CNR Sports: A Status Report of Past & Present"

Honors Contracts:

- Akosuah Agyei: "Clean the Air"
- Kayla Cummings: Etre Francais: le Dilemme de Tolerance en France"
- Maya Menon & Catherine Santivanez: "Devil in the Shape of a Woman"
- Veronica Harris: El Romanticismo en Espana e Hispanoamerica"

Seminars:

- HON315: American Singer-Songwriter: Café Dylan
- HON490/491: Senior Symposium: *The Fault of Our Stars*





## BRUNCH WITH THE PRESIDENT!

*On April 29, President Huntington hosted Honors students at a brunch in the Castle Parlors.*





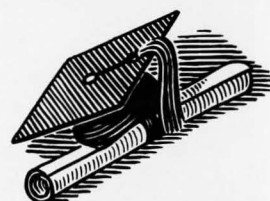
*Congratulations*



*Farewell  
Seniors!*



*Class of 2012*



# OUR FIRST RESIDENT ASSISTANT

Alicia Muth, Lena Fin, Miranda Polat, Shacelles, Lee-Anne Daley, '15

As a first-year student there is a lot that to worry about. Will I be able to make friends? How will I handle the work load? How will I pay for text books? Should I get a job? Will I have time to relax? What if I fight with my roommate? One person that we are told to look to for answers is our Resident Assistant, or RA. In the Honors Wing here at The College of New Rochelle, **Cassandra Irons** was our RA for our first year.

**Cassandra (Cassie) Irons** is much more than just an RA on campus. She is also president of Spectrum, editor of *Femmes d'Espirit*, a Summer Orientation Leader, a tutor at the Center for Academic Excellence, a friend, and — well — much, much more. With all of these things that she handles, it would be a surprise if she had found any time for herself! But, she graduates this year, which is why we, some of her first-year residents, have decided to write this. This is our way of giving thanks to the fantastic RA who has been available to us on any and all occasions.

**Magdalena Fin:** Cassie is “always available, attentive and caring. Cassie has been not only a great RA but also a friend. Knowing that there is someone who can address the worries we as freshman have had, it’s been great to have her to count on. We’ll miss you Cassie. I hope you’ll stay in touch with the [future] sophomores.”

**Miranda Polat:** “Cassie was super awesome. She helped us in ways that no other RA could. Being a first-year in college was hard enough without being an Honors student, but Cassie was always willing to talk and help you in time of need. We will miss her greatly, but I know we all hope that she succeeds and does well outside of the CNR community.”

**Shacelles Bonner:** “Cassie is an amazing RA. She not only cared about us but she also made our most difficult times fun. She was the best person to go to if I needed a question answered or if I needed advice. I would always look forward to our wing meetings because after all the necessities were taken care of, we would all just sit, reflect on our day, and, most of all, make jokes. Cassie is always upbeat and always looking at the more positive side of things. She was the glue that held those in the Honors wing together and she will surely be missed. We love you Cassie.”

**LeeAnne Daley:** “Cassie is a great RA and I am glad to have met her. She has made my freshman year a very enjoyable one. She is friendly, keeps us informed and has done a great job at improving my CNR experience with her activities and presence. She is loved and will be missed very much.”

So, as Cassie leaves us we can only hope that people just as amazing will fill her shoes. **Kayla Cummings** will be taking her Resident Assistant position, **Kira Velazquez** will become president of Spectrum, and **Alicia Muth** will be taking her place as editor of *Femmes d'Espirit* and possibly her job at the Center for Academic Excellence. But the gap left by the absence of her friendship will be something that we all have to work hard to fill.

*Thank you Cassie.*



# FAREWELL TO HONORS

Veronica Harris, '12

*Why I left and came back.*

I can still remember the day pretty vividly; it was Freshmen Orientation and Dr. Bass approached me about the Honors Program. Initially I was skeptical; I did not want to add more work to my load in college. I still remember what Dr. Bass said, "It would be a different kind of work." So I gave it a try and everything was fine...until junior year.

Being in the Education Department is almost like a second major, and the fieldwork hours increase with every semester. Therefore, I had very little time to do anything else besides schoolwork. Dr. Bass was on sabbatical, so I took a break from Honors. There was no way I could maintain my sanity and take six classes for my last two years at The College of New Rochelle.

However, Dr. Bass talked to me, once again, and introduced me to the Honors Contract, and, with that, I was back on board with the Honors Program.

While I still have little free time now, literally as I type this, I am glad that I made the decision to come back. Why? Because there is a sense of pride and hard work that comes with this program. With smaller class sizes, there is a stronger connection with the professors and fellow Honors students. The classes are interesting and build bridges among different disciplines. Without a doubt I can say that I am glad I came back.

I would like to wish the lower classes and the incoming class good luck. You might just need it, and try to keep everything in perspective. Thank you, Honors, for allowing me to explore realms outside my major in a different setting.



# WHAT I LEARNED FROM HONORS

Cassandra Irons, '12

I have tried to start this piece many times already but nothing seemed right. How do I start? What do I say? What is important enough to write about? Honors has been such an influence on me and what I have done and I would never have done so many of these things had it not been for Honors.

It all started with the application over the summer before coming to CNR. I started my first year with 12 other first-year Honors students. It was because of one of them that I became involved with the CNR swim team. Through another Honors student, I joined the Spirit Competition Committee. It has been one of my favorite committees here. Towards the end of the year, I was convinced by a graduating Honors student to apply to be a Peer Minister. Following her advice, I was accepted into the program for the following year.

My sophomore year, I had the position as a Peer Minister. I worked with Campus Ministry and helped coordinate Midnight Runs and the Lord's Pantry. Through Honors, I was a part of Honors Board. It was great to be able to hear what was going on with Honors and be a part of the process of changes to the program. I befriended Mary Henderson, who was the first RA for the Honors wing. Because of my classes, I had to do an Honors Contract spring semester, so Mary was a positive influence for me to stay on top of things. She showed me the ropes of Honors Conference Day and helped me pull together my first poster to present. I applied to be an RA and got the position. Over the summer, I was informed that I would become the RA for the Honors wing, taking Mary's place. I was going to be following in her footsteps and I hoped I could live up to what she was leaving behind.

My junior year met me with some struggles. I was in a new position as RA and continuing as Peer Minister, as well as working on getting Spectrum approved. I was the RA for a wonderful group of first-year students and a handful of returners. Peer Ministry became too much to handle with everything else, so I chose to not return the following year. Through Honors, I was given the opportunity to travel to Portland, Maine, to the NRHC and cover the conference for Femmes. It was an amazing opportunity to see and learn about a new city amongst other Honors students who understood your own balancing workload. It was an amazing experience that allowed me to come out of my comfort zone and interact with other students.

Senior year. This year is my last year in Honors. I am finishing out the year as the Honors RA, an Honors Board member, and Spectrum President. This year I was able to present at the Honors conference in Baltimore, Maryland, and experience presenting to a group of people that I was unfamiliar with. I was also editor for *Femmes*, which was a fun experience organizing and put together everyone's submissions. I will truly miss every piece of the Honors Program when I graduate but it has prepared me for many things that may come my way. My last word of advice? Take every opportunity given to you that you are able to but don't overextend yourself. It will be worth it in the end.

# HELLO, GOODBYE!

Rachelle LeBlanc '12

As the year draws to an end and graduation comes ever closer I've been looking back over my four years at CNR and although I've had my ups and downs I had a good time here. Yes, I've had fights with the school and I tried to transfer out my first year. But it failed, so I took that as a sign that I was supposed to be at CNR. My classes and my education have been better than I can ask. Classes were extremely hard sometimes but I picked them so I have no one to blame but myself. I've met so many great people and I've made connections with many of my professors, which I hope I can carry with me in the "real world" (meaning when I'm looking for a job.)

Wow! 135 credits (18 credits a semester) later translate into 35 classes in four years. So I ask myself, what were my best classes or favorite moments? I've studied everything from ethics in society to "American Gothic," from modern teenagers to human rights, but my favorite classes are, well, all of them! I've learned so much from each class that I use in my life now. They weren't just classes that on the last day everything I learned flew out of my brain. In the papers that I've written and the class discussions I've participated in, my classes are woven together. In my opinion that is my best memory from CNR. (Although, spending a month in France was pretty amazing and changed my life.)

But those challenging classes do have their fun times. My sophomore year, in a drawing class with Professor Maxwell, for our final project we were broken into groups to create a piece

together in class. As a little background, I am extremely neat. My group mates made the comment that I never get dirty when I'm drawing or painting so their solution was to have me step in red paint and walk across our picture. I did it, but as soon as I was done my feet were in the sink getting washed. I cut out my footprint and pasted it in my sketchbook for keeps. That's just one of the fun times I've had here; I could go on and on but I have to keep this letter short and sweet so I won't go into anymore.

If I were to do it over I would probably change my major from Comm. Arts to Fine Arts, but only because in my time here I fell in love with graphic design. I've taken most of the design classes the school offers, but I missed one or two and if I had majored in Art, I would have been able to spend more time creating. But I'm happy with how it's worked out and I'm just thankful to have found a career path that I love, but first a master's degree in Graphic Design. I wish you all the best of luck with your time here and take advantage of all CNR offers, don't just sit in your room complaining. I have a feeling that if you engage in activities you won't regret it, it will make your college career all the greater.





## FAREWELL TO HONORS

Akosuah Agyei, '12

The College of New Rochelle's Honors Program offers some of the most engaging and interdisciplinary courses available on campus. I joined the program in my sophomore year and did not regret my decision. The program enabled me to broaden the scope of my knowledge as I took the Colloquium course on Human Rights. Before this class, I had not known the main measures taken to form the United Nations. I knew an organization called the United Nations existed but did not know what it could and could not do. I was totally clueless about the countries involved, and their rights and responsibilities.

At this point in my college life, I was a junior who also wanted to join the Model United Nations Club on campus. So, I took this course very seriously and with it, I learned that human beings did not have certain basic rights, like the right to water before September 2010. I was amazed as to how the right to water was not seen as a necessary item to include in the basic rights of a human being especially since the need for water comes first even before food. Through the Colloquium class, I learned the whole process and mitigations that went on before the UN was founded in 1945 after World War II to replace the League of Nations. The UN has a security council with five permanent and ten rotating members. The basic knowledge of what the UN entails and its restrictions would not have been something I might have been introduced to had I not been in the Honors Program, especially since my concentration was in chemistry and biology.

After taking the Colloquium course, I felt more equipped to become part of the Model UN club and even be a delegate in World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) for our assigned country--Czech Republic. This is just one of the courses that intrigued me so much that I became more interested in international affairs and decided to pursue a career in the Global Health Sector or in the Mèdecins Sans Frontier program. I am so glad to have been part of such a wonderful program that intrigued my intellect. Being in this program is a lot of work but in the end, the reward is worth it. I learned something that channeled my future career for the better. Current and incoming Honors students, I wish you all the best in your endeavors and hope you will also acquire the skills and knowledge through interdisciplinary activities to broaden your horizon.

*Peace,  
Akosuah Agyei*



# THE FAULT IN OUR STARS

Rachelle LeBlanc, Akos Agyei, and Cassandra Irons '12

*The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings.*

*-Julius Caesar (I, ii, 140-141)*

Welcome Class of 2016!

As Honors Seniors we have the responsibility of choosing the “common read” for the incoming first-year Honors students. Over this past year we read book after book trying to find the right one for you. We wanted to find a book that was challenging yet fun to read, a book that taught morals, came with lessons, and was relatable to you. Being a first-year at a very small all-women’s college can be tough and sometimes you might feel inadequate and alone. Since the majority of our Honors students are from different states we wanted a book that addresses being an outsider, being in a new surrounding; a book about finding and accepting oneself in a world where this is increasingly difficult. With all of these criteria and more in mind the three of us set out on our biggest reading adventure of the year.

We each picked a book we thought would be a good choice and our professor, Dr. Quinn, came up with the others. We read 10 books in total, which translated to about one book every two weeks... with a few breaks. Two weeks to read a book might not sound that bad but it was surprising how quickly a new class – and a new book – came along. Along with being in the Honors program, Cassie is a math and chemistry major, Akos is biology and chemistry, and I’m an English and Communication Arts major. None of us have much time to spare, but despite our schedules we took our task extremely seriously. It was a long and hard year of searching but we made it and we came out with the perfect book for you.

We read a few books that would have been acceptable, but in the end we wanted to choose a great book rather than just an acceptable one. We were searching for something that each one of you, no matter where you are from, what race, or religion you are, could relate to. We needed a book that grabbed your attention as reader and also provided challenging discussions for class and papers. We needed also to shock, teach and challenge you emotionally, mentally and physically. So then there were two. We narrowed it down to *Nineteen Minutes* by Jodi Picoult and *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green.

The final decision was tough in terms of choosing the book with the better theme. Both novels had such important young adult/adult topics that we felt would be good for you all to read. So if we can’t choose based on theme then it came down to content. I’m sorry Jodi Picoult but John Green won it unanimously. We found that *The Fault in Our Stars* bridged the gap between a young adult novel and an adult one. While seemingly easy to read, it has surprising depth in

both theme and content. Just like college, *The Fault in Our Stars* becomes deeper and more satisfying the more effort you put into it.

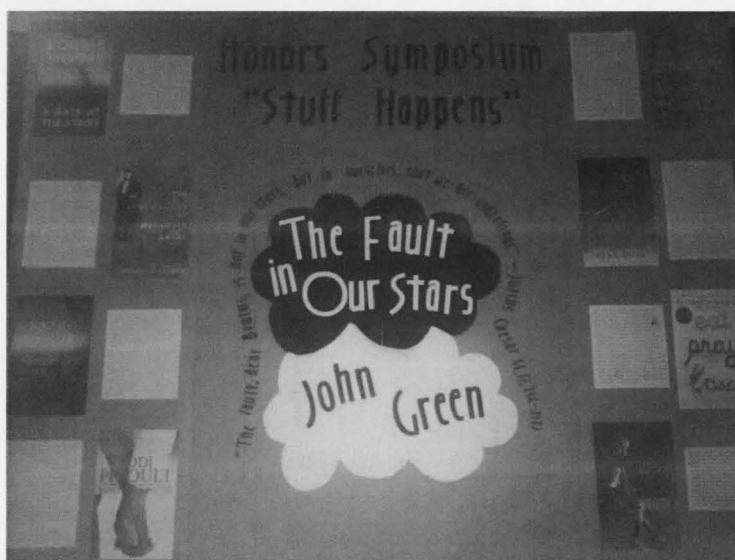
*The Fault in Our Stars* is a recently published novel that Cassie offered as a last-minute choice. The New York Times raved about the book as Green's best novel to date so we gave it a shot; at this point we weren't sure about picking any of the books we had read so no harm in reading another. At first we weren't huge fans of how it's a NYT bestseller. We thought it would be too popular of a book but after we read it, it just didn't matter anymore. Even for those of you who read it already—a problem when a best seller is involved—we decided that it's worth reading again. We also were concerned that the writing is a little too "young adult," but it's much more complex than it appears to be. Themes and references from classic and contemporary literature are seamlessly woven into the novel, and the more you explore these references the more meaningful it becomes. But it wasn't just that to win us over, it was the underlying message. Things just happen! We don't always have control over the things that happen to us in our lives, good or bad. Because of this, it's not what happens to us that make us good (or bad!) people, it's how we react to these events. The characters in *The Fault in Our Stars* teach a really valuable lesson in life. Life is no more about death and cancer and illness than it is about trophies and successes; it's about living your life on your own terms, and walking away from life with a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. Try to lead the best life you can, despite whatever sorrows cross your path. That's why chose *The Fault in Our Stars* for you and we hope you enjoy it as much as we did.

Take this college experience to find, accept and be happy with yourself.  
Good Luck!

Skenech Izzi

Cassandra Moore

R. L. Blum

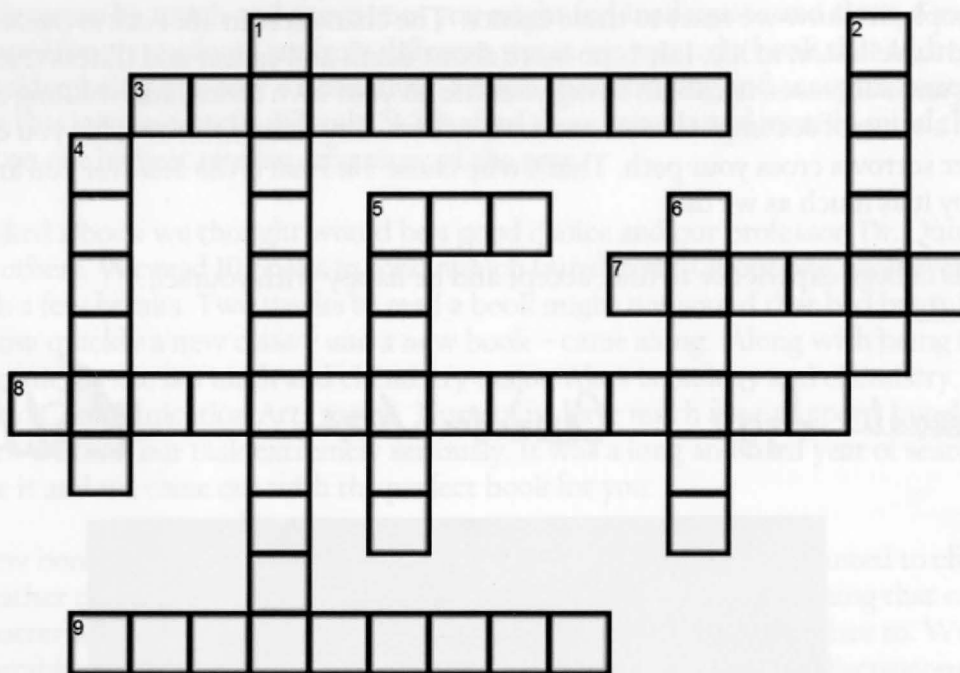


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Hard



Across:

3. The reason we must say goodbye to the seniors
5. Where to go when tutoring is needed (abbreviation)
7. Building where the art gallery is located
8. Newest building on campus
9. Event held the first Sunday in May

Down:

1. Woman who began the Ursuline Sisters
2. Home of the Honors' Wing
4. Building where CNR Drama holds its plays
5. Honors' Wing RA
6. Given to all of us at the beginning of our first year, can be bought from the school for \$1.00 when we graduate

Created by: Alicia Muth, '15